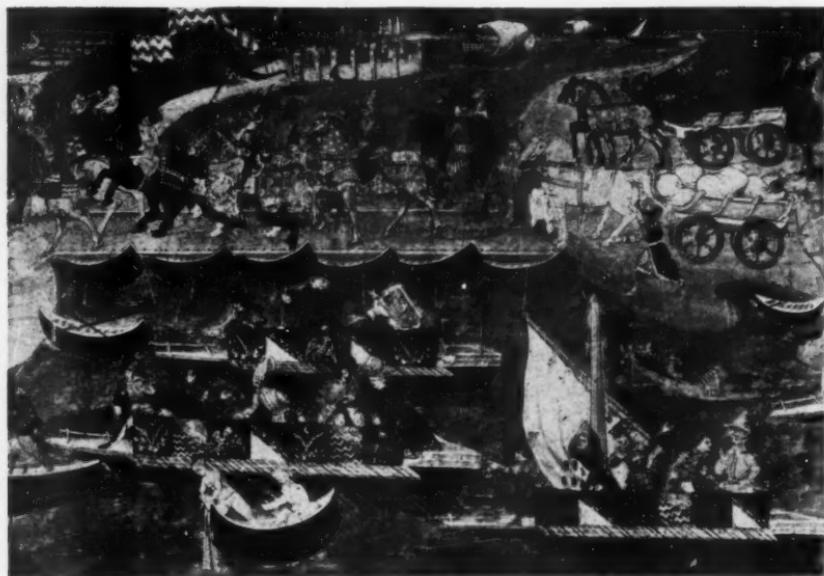
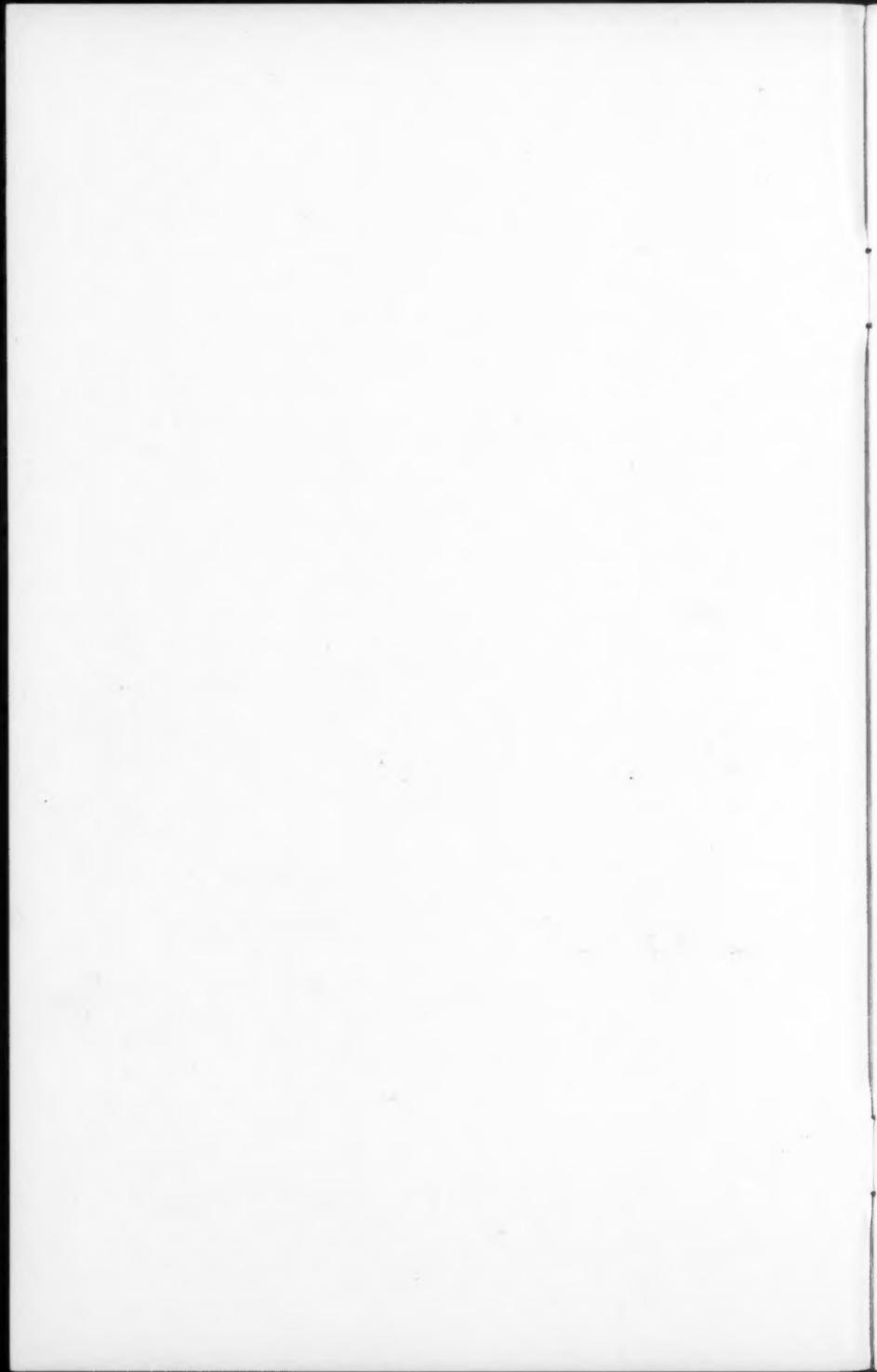


BULLETIN  
OF THE  
ALLEN MEMORIAL ART MUSEUM  
OBERLIN COLLEGE



Marco del Buono and/or Apollonio di Giovanni, Detail of Battle Cassone,  
Allen Memorial Art Museum.



## FOREWORD

This bulletin of the Allen Memorial Art Museum of Oberlin College is the first of a series which it is hoped will be published from time to time. As a matter of fact the second bulletin containing a catalogue of the accessions to the museum for the years 1940 to the present is being published simultaneously with this.

For this first number, Professor Wolfgang Stechow of the Oberlin Department of Fine Arts has prepared a study of an Italian quattrocento cassone panel which the museum has recently acquired through the generosity of Mr. R. T. Miller, Jr. It is planned in future issues to publish similar studies of other objects in the museum collections, lists of accessions and matters of interest connected with the museum and the department.



Fig. 1. Marco del Buono and/or Apollonio di Giovanni,  
Battle between Athenians and Persians.  
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin.

MARCO DEL BUONO AND  
APOLLONIO DI GIOVANNI

Cassone Painters

The Allen Memorial Art Museum of Oberlin has recently acquired a quattrocento cassone panel (figs. 1, 5, 7,)<sup>1</sup> which is of exceptional interest for two reasons. First, it depicts a subject which is unique, at least in works of this kind. Second, it furnishes the key for the identification of two artists who were at the head of one of the busiest Florentine cassone workshops.

The subject is a battle between Athenians and Persians. Inscriptions name, among the former, *Cimon* (in the center before the right tent, fig. 5) and *Pericles* (upper left, on the white horse), among the latter, "*Serxes*" (to the right, on the pontoon bridge, fig. 7). The theme is so unusual that Schubring who knew about this cassone from written reference only, refused to believe that it was actually represented.<sup>2</sup> Yet, there it is, plus plenty of confusion. We may assume that the strip of water over which Xerxes is passing, is meant to refer to the Hellespont over which the Persian king went by a bridge of pontoons on his way to Greece in 480. But the three men singled out for identification could hardly have met in one and the same battle. The sea battle of Salamis where Cimon fought Xerxes, was represented on a companion piece of our panel (see below and fig. 2). Pericles was only about ten years old in 480, and no report mentions his participation in any of those encounters. The land battle on the left half might possibly refer to Aris-

For valuable help I am indebted, first of all, to Mrs. Laurine Mack Bongiorno who went over thousands of coats-of-arms in publications not accessible to me; furthermore, to Professor Leigh Alexander of Oberlin College, Mr. Paul Drey of New York, Mr. Frits Lugt of The Hague, Professor Ulrich Middeldorf of Chicago University, and Dr. Ernö Wittmann of New York.

<sup>1</sup>Inv. no. 43.239. Panel, 16½ by 60¾ inches.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Schubring, *Cassoni*, Leipzig, 1915, p. 111 and p. 282, nos. 277-279.

tides' victory on the small island of Psyttalea, between Salamis and Attica, with a suggestion of the battle of Plataea in 479 when Persian cavalry was decisively beaten by the Spartans, thrown in for good measure.<sup>3</sup> All this would still leave several features unexplained, e.g., the location of Cimon near a rather conspicuous group of fettered prisoners before the tents. But one feels that the naive charm of the painter's narrative should not be weighed down, and its enjoyment spoiled, by asking for greater historical correctness. We also do not expect to find correct rendering of Greek and Persian armor, or, for that matter, of the buildings near an ancient battleground. This panel precedes the more serious attempts at a correct reconstruction of classical antiquity: It still belongs to what Aby Warburg has so happily termed antiquity "alla franzese".<sup>4</sup> All the more surprising is the fact that the painter has tackled this topic at all. What were his literary sources? Herodotus and Plutarch were not unknown at his time (that is, to be exact, the year 1463, as we shall see later); he could have read about those battles in translations of their works,<sup>5</sup> or heard about them, and then tried his hand at a depiction which turned out to be pretty much garbled. There was no pictorial tradition at his disposal as far as this particular subject was concerned. In the light of this knowledge we might even marvel at what he did achieve. Moreover, "Pericles" looks strikingly young, and this feature seems to prove that the painter realized the problem of the historical situation more clearly than one would expect.

The first mention of the panel is found in the sale of the collection of Count Toscanelli of Pisa, held in Florence on

<sup>3</sup>The reference to the battle of Cyrus in 449 (Catalogue of the Weinberger sale, see below) is easily ruled out.

<sup>4</sup>Aby Warburg, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Leipzig, 1932, index s.v. "Tracht alla franzese." Werner Weisbach, *Triomfi*, Berlin, 1919, p. 35.

<sup>5</sup>Some of Plutarch's *Lives* were translated into Latin as early as about 1400; there were several Florentines, including Leonardo Bruni and Palla Strozzi, among the translators. But the first Latin version of the *Life of Cimon* seems to have been given by Leonardo Giustiniani (died in 1446). A Latin *Herodotus* was made available by Lorenzo Valla (died in 1457). See Georg Voigt, *Il risorgimento dell' antichità classica*, Florence, 1888-1890, index s.v. Plutarco and Erodoto. I do not know of any illuminated manuscripts datable prior to 1463.

April 9-23, 1883. The catalogue listed it as no. 57, gave it a fanciful attribution to Dello,<sup>6</sup> and described it as Themistocles (*sic*)<sup>7</sup> and Cimon battling the Persians under Xerxes. At that time, it was still offered together with its original lateral parts which contained, one, two fighting horsemen and a young couple on horseback, the lady having a falcon on her hand, the other, five horsemen fighting near a castle at whose window appear a king, a queen, and a young girl. Its companion piece, i.e., the front of a companion cassone (no. 58 of the sale) showed the *Triumph of Themistocles and Cimon* (more about which below), and had likewise preserved its side panels, one showing a couple on a canopied chariot drawn by two horses which are mounted by negroes, the other, three ladies picking fruits and flowers, and behind, a building with two persons at a window. To the compiler of the catalogue, the attribution to Dello seemed to be supported by the fact that the panels came "from the villa della Magia near Florence which belonged to the Medici family for whom Deilo did many of his works". This may refer to Magia di Quarata, in the Val d' Ombrone near Pistoja, but that villa did not belong to the Medici in the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The third Toscanelli panel which Schubring, in his rather inadequate excerpt from the sale catalogue,<sup>9</sup> classified with the same lot, does not seem to have belonged there at all. It represented another *Triumph*, was listed (no. 59) as "attributed to Dello" only, and although its measurements were approximately the same, and although it, too, came from

<sup>6</sup>Whom Vasari, apparently without valid reasons, had taken to be the "inventor" of cassone painting.

<sup>7</sup>It should be mentioned that the inscription *Pericles* on the Oberlin cassone shows no signs of having been repainted.

<sup>8</sup>It was probably built by the Panciatichi in the early fourteenth century, still owned by that family in 1563, and returned to it after a brief period of confiscation by the Medici. Later, it was the property of the Attavanti, the Ricasoli, and eventually, of the Amati of Pistoja (Giuseppe Tigri, *Pistoja e il suo territorio*, Pistoja, 1853, p. 342 f.). In view of the fact that the cassone, as shown below, was made for a Rucellai-Vettori wedding, it may be worth mentioning that a villa in the small village of *Macia* near Florence, formerly belonging to the Lippi family, has been the property of the *Rucellai* since 1755; Guido Carocci, *I dintorni di Firenze*, Florence, 1906, I, p. 331.

<sup>9</sup>op. cit., p. 282.

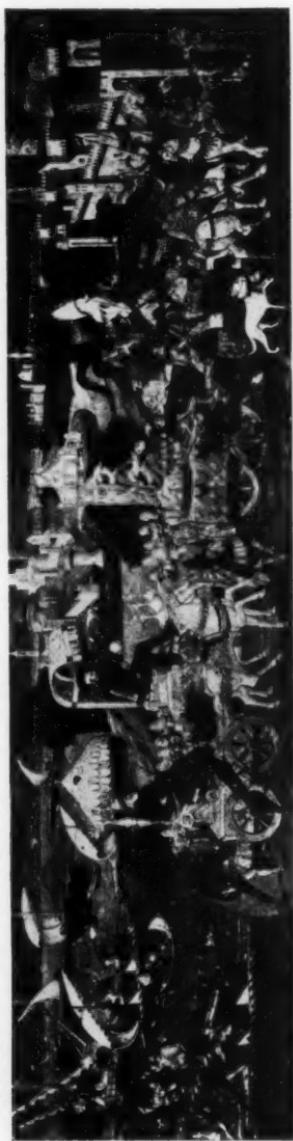


Fig. 2. Marco del Buono and/or Apollonio di Giovanni,  
Triumph of Themistocles and Cimon.  
Destroyed Panel.

the "Villa la Magia", there is no indication of its having formed part of the same group as the nos. 57 and 58 of the sale.

The two companion pieces of the Toscanelli collection remained together after the sale, though minus their lateral parts. Both were later owned by the Viennese art dealer, A. Werner. In 1923, one passed into the collection of E. Weinberger who disposed of it again in the sale at Wawra's in Vienna on October 22-24, 1929 (no. 456, attributed to the Anghiari Master and dated about 1440).<sup>10</sup> This is the one which has eventually found its place in Oberlin. The other was bought by Dr. Ernö Wittmann of Budapest. When he left Hungary at the outbreak of the present war, he deposited it with other art treasures in the town of Bath, England, where it perished in a bombardment by German planes. A photograph is all that remains of it; it is here reproduced with the kind permission of the owner (fig. 2). On it, a brief indication of the battle of Salamis was given to the left; but its main subject was the triumphal entry of the victors, Themistocles, Cimon (both named), and a third, into what seems to stand for the city of Athens, with Persian prisoners proudly displayed. In Petrarch's *Triumph of Fame*, Cimon, his father Miltiades, Themistocles, Theseus and Aristides, are grouped together as heroes to whom burial in their native soil was cruelly denied.<sup>11</sup> Since Petrarch's *Trionfi* have proved to be one of the most important sources of the Florentine cassone painters of the Quattrocento,<sup>12</sup> this panel seems to

<sup>10</sup>According to the catalogue, it also was once in the Stroganoff collection in Rome.

<sup>11</sup>"*Triumphus Famae*, II, 28-34:

Milciade, che'l gran gioco (giogo?) a Grecia tolse,  
E'l buon figliuol, che con pietà perfetta  
Legò sè vivo e'l padre morto sciolse;  
Theseo, Temistocles con questa setta,  
Aristides, che fu un greco Fabritio:  
A tutti fu crudelmente interdetta  
La patria sepoltura.

All this is derived from Valerius Maximus, *Exempla Memorabilia*, 5, 3, ext. 3. The legend which makes Cimon go to prison in order to obtain his father's body for burial, appears first in Diodorus Siculus, X, 30, 1.

<sup>12</sup>Werner Weisbach, *op. cit.*, p. 20 ff. The author has not adduced any instances of Greek triumphs; he even eliminated the only case listed by Schubring, i.e., the triumph of Alexander (*ibid.*, p. 32, note 1).

offer less difficulties concerning its literary derivation than does its companion piece.

When writing his monumental work on cassoni, Schubring had good reasons for expressing his particular regret at the disappearance of the Toscanelli panels.<sup>13</sup> For the sale catalogue of that collection had duly recorded one more very important item, and that is the fact that the panel with the battle showed the coats-of-arms of two great Florentine families: the Rucellai and the Vettori. Now, Aby Warburg had made a great find in Florence which with characteristic generosity, he had placed at Schubring's disposal when the latter prepared his book on cassoni. This was the *bottega book* of one of the Florentine cassone workshops, jointly headed by Marco del Buono Giamberti and Apollonio di Giovanni.<sup>14</sup> It lists a great many marriage chests delivered to Florentine customers between the years 1446 and 1463 (or 1465),<sup>15</sup> also indicating the occasion of the commission and prices paid. It must have been disappointing to Schubring as well as to Warburg that not a single cassone mentioned in that list could be identified with a surviving example—or so it seemed. However, Schubring realized that the Toscanelli panels might have furnished the key for the identification of one of his anonymous masters, for he had noticed that the *bottega book* of Marco del Buono and Apollonio di Giovanni did contain the following entry: "1463: Figlia di Giovanni Rucellai a Piero di Francesco di Pagolo Vettori, fl. 50." But the Toscanelli cassoni were not reproduced in the sale catalogue, and they seemed to be lost.

When the "Oberlin" panel reappeared in the Weinberger sale in 1929, the catalogue failed to notice the relation to the *bottega book* although it did list the Schubring number. It was Dr. Wittman, the last owner of the destroyed panel, who realized that both of the Toscanelli pictures had survived and must definitely be identified with the item in the *bottega book*. I understand that the late Professor Schubring fully accepted

<sup>13</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 111 and p. 437.

<sup>14</sup> Reprinted in full by Schubring, *op. cit.*, p. 430 ff.

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that identification as did Dr. Meller of Budapest who prepared a publication on that matter, and Dr. Planicsig who has written the private catalogue of Dr. Wittmann's collection (in ms.). At the present moment, communication with both of these scholars is impossible. Since one of the Toscanelli panels has now found its place in a public collection in this country, I feel justified in offering a short summary of my own conclusions, based upon the recovery of the Oberlin picture.

As stated before, the sole basis of Schubring's identification of the artist of the Toscanelli panels with Marco del Buono and /or Apollonio di Giovanni were the two facts that the *bottega book* mentions delivery of a marriage chest for the daughter of Giovanni Rucellai and Pietro Vettori in 1463 and that one of the paintings, according to the sale catalogue, bore the coats-of-arms of these two families. The latter statement is found true. On the boats of the Oberlin panel, the arms of the Rucellai with the lion (Per bend gules, a lion passant or, and barry, indented of eight or and azure)<sup>16</sup> occur three times, and the arms of the Vettori with the lilies (Triparty, per bend sable, France ancient, and argent)<sup>17</sup> five times (fig. 7). They are mingled with two prominently displayed emblems which are rather puzzling. The one containing two feathers, a ring, and a scroll, reappears (slightly varied) on the first banner in the upper left and on the left tent, opposite the three feathers which refer to the crest of the Vettori coat-of-arms (fig. 5). There is some possibility that the ring, the feathers and the scroll allude to the Medici,<sup>18</sup> by virtue of the fact that the long-hoped-for connection of the

<sup>16</sup>Luigi Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Rucellai*, Florence, 1861, introduction.

<sup>17</sup>Pompeo Litta, *Le famiglie celebri italiane*, Milan (1819-1882), vol. IV, table II.—The correct colors of the emblems have not always been respected by the cassone painter.

<sup>18</sup>The Medici emblem which shows three (*sic*) feathers, ring, diamond, and scroll, was indeed occasionally fused with their own arms by the Rucellai after their intermarriage with the Medici (see the example illustrated by Passerini, *op. cit.*, and in particular, the version reproduced in Jacopo Gelli, *Gli ex libris italiane*, Milan, 1930, which comes closer to the emblem on the Oberlin cassone as far as the feathers are concerned; also, it does not show the Rucellai arms at all and would look like a Medici emblem were it not for the substitution, on the scroll, of the name Rucellai for the Medici *sempre*).

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Rucellai with that family had in 1461 partly been realized through the engagement between young Bernardo di Giovanni Rucellai (age 13) and Nannina de' Medici (age 12).<sup>19</sup> I have no explanation at all for the other one, an eagle (or phoenix?) with "little to go on", which was also seen, alternating with the Vettori coat-of-arms, on the destroyed panel (fig. 2), and which probably belonged with the Vettori rather than the Rucellai whose main emblem does not seem to have been present on that picture. But on one of the horses to the left of the Oberlin panel (fig. 15), there appear the three half moons of the Strozzi, a reminder of the fact that Jacopa Rucellai (1413-1468), the mother of the bride Caterina, was a member of that family.<sup>20</sup> Whatever the meaning of the unidentified emblems, the main coats-of-arms of both the Rucellai and Vettori are in unambiguous evidence. The date 1463 harmonizes to perfection with the style of the Toscanelli panels, and since no other marriage has ever taken place between members of the two families, the correctness of our identification is assured without the shadow of a doubt. The bridegroom, Pietro di Francesco Vettori, born in 1443, was elected *capitano* in Volterra in 1478, became ambassador to Ferdinand of Aragon in Naples in 1489, and in the same year Governor of San Miniato al Tedesco. He was to be the father of three sons, one of whom, Francesco (1474-1539), became a friend of Macchiavelli and himself an able statesman and historian.<sup>21</sup> Pietro's mother was Elisabetta di Piero del Benino.<sup>22</sup> The father of the bride, Gio-

<sup>19</sup>The wedding took place in 1466. W. Weisbach (*op. cit.*, p. 28, note) has shown that the two cassoni, Schubring nos. 111 and 112, were made on that occasion since they contain the Rucellai and Medici arms. They were not made in our workshop which closed down in 1465. Combinations of the Rucellai and Medici emblems (see also note 18) occur repeatedly on Rucellai buildings such as the façade of Santa Maria Novella and the Holy Sepulchre in San Pancrazio but do not seem to have been consulted in connection with attempts to date them. Obviously, the year 1466 (or, possibly, 1461) can serve as a *terminus post* for such occurrences.

<sup>20</sup>She was a daughter of Palla Strozzi, an arch-enemy of the Medici, whom we have mentioned in note 5 as a translator of Plutarch's *Lives*.

<sup>21</sup>Litta, *op. cit.* On Francesco Vettori see *Enciclopedia italiana*, XXXV, Rome, 1937, p. 279.

<sup>22</sup>The Del Benino arms (illustrated in A. Marquand, *Robbia Heraldry*, p. 170) do not appear on our cassone.

vanni Rucellai (1403-1481), is well known to every student of Florence in the quattrocento. One of the greatest art patrons of his time, he had Leone Battista Alberti erect his palace in Via della vigna nuova, the façade of Santa Maria Novella and the Holy Sepulchre in his chapel in San Pancrazio. In addition, he left behind the invaluable *Zibaldone*, one of our most important sources on quattrocento life in Florence. Here we should also mention the remarkable letter which Marsilio Ficino wrote him in answer to his questions regarding a significant, "personalized" change in the crest of his coat-of-arms.<sup>23</sup> Among the painters employed by him during his long years of patronage, he listed Paolo Uccello, Domenico Veneziano, Andrea Castagno, Fra Filippo Lippi, Antonio Pollaiuolo, and Andrea Verrocchio.<sup>24</sup> Under these circumstances, we can hardly blame him for not mentioning Marco del Buono or Apollonio di Giovanni, although we can prove that he commissioned them with bridal chests for all but one of his daughters who were married during the period covered by the *bottega book*.<sup>25</sup>

As to the stylistic identification of the Toscanelli panels, the attribution to the Anghiari Master, given in the catalogue of the Weinberger sale, is easily ruled out. Schubring had tentatively discussed the possibility that Marco del Buono and/or Apollonio di Giovanni might, on the basis of the then unknown Toscanelli pictures, turn out to be identical with his "Cassone Master".<sup>26</sup> It was as good a guess as any, considering the fact that Schubring did not know the decisive works; but as it is,

<sup>23</sup>This was the *Fortuna* emblem which occurs on the magnificent relief in the court-yard of the palace in Via della vigna; Aby Warburg, *op. cit.*, p. 146 ff.

<sup>24</sup>Marcotti, *Un mercante fiorentino e la sua famiglia nel sec. XV*, Florence, 1881, p. 67 f. See also Martin Wackernagel, *Der Lebensraum des Künstlers in der florentinischen Renaissance*, Leipzig, 1938, p. 232 ff.

<sup>25</sup>They were: Maddalena (to Domenico di Giovanni Bartoli, 1447), Alessandra (to Bernardo di Giannozzo Manetti, 1452), and Margherita (to Jacopo di Francesco Ventura, 1455); see Schubring, *op. cit.*, pp. 431, 434, 436. When will these cassoni be recovered? In 1452, the same workshop notes: "A Giovanni di Pagolo Rucellai dipingono nel Cielo della Loggia, 1451, fl. 9" (*ibid.*, p. 433).

<sup>26</sup>*op. cit.*, pp. 89 and 111.



Fig. 3. Marco del Buona and/or Apollonio di Giovanni,  
Scenes from Virgil's *Aeneid*.  
No. 34, Jerves coll., Yale University.

another well known artist wins out, and that is the so-called *Dido* or *Virgil Master*.

The closest parallels to the style of the Oberlin painting are found on the Virgil panels of the Jarves collection at Yale University (figs. 3, 4).<sup>27</sup> These charming works show the same spirit, the same inventory of poses and gestures and even, or so it seems to me, the same "hand" throughout. The splendid photographic details generously made accessible to me by the administration of the Jarves collection, and reproduced here alongside of details of the Oberlin panel (figs. 6, 8), make it possible to prove that identity quite conclusively. There is the same kind of inscription of the main personages. The boats are treated the same way, including the handling of the oars and the application of the coats-of-arms; so are the sailing ships which show the identical shape and eye-like port-holes in the bow. More important, the same agitated poses and gesticulations of the figures are in evidence everywhere. Notice, in particular, the straddling stance of the man entering the temple, and the similar one standing in the boat to the left of the Jarves cassone no. 35 (fig. 6), and compare it with the soldier in the center of the Oberlin picture (in the reverse) (fig. 5). The man who has both his hands raised occurs on boats in both the Oberlin and the Jarves panel no. 34 (figs. 7 and 8). The similarity of the facial types is notable throughout. For the treatment of the landscape compare the background to the right of the center in Oberlin and Jarves no. 35 (figs. 5 and 4); for the cities, "Rome" on the same Jarves cassone and "Athens" on the destroyed picture (figs. 4 and 2). The colors appear to be brighter on the Yale panels but they are substantially the same on the Oberlin painting, and the rose-yellow "changeant" is found in the dress of the Jarves *Aeolus* in exactly the same shade as in the standard bearer before Xerxes on the Oberlin panel (figs. 8 and 7). Even the "compositions" (*sit venia verbo*) offer certain similarities; notice the diagonal "introduction" to

<sup>27</sup>Schubring, *op. cit.*, nos. 223 and 224, plate XLVIII. In a lecture, delivered at Yale University in January, 1942, Professor Edgar Wind has given a fascinating iconographical analysis of these works.

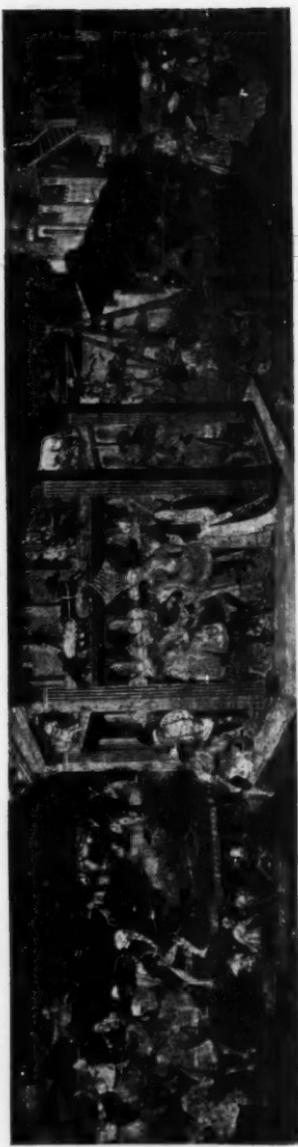


Fig. 4. Marco del Buono and/or Apollonio di Giovanni,  
Scenes from Virgil's *Aeneid*.  
No. 35, Jerves coll., Yale University.

the left, and the counter-movement to the right, on both Jarves no. 34 and the Oberlin picture (figs. 3 and 1).

We owe to Professor Offner one of the more recent catalogues of the works of this *bottega*.<sup>28</sup> He insists that two other Jarves cassoni, the *Tournament in Piazza Santa Croce* and the *Meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*, emerged from the same shop. This seems plausible enough as far as the latter is concerned, but I believe that the *Tournament*—as already suggested by Schubring<sup>29</sup> and Sirén<sup>30</sup>—shows a different hand, and since the event depicted on it took place in 1439, it seems to precede our panels by a considerable margin of time. Of the other works listed by Schubring and Offner as products of the same *bottega* and known to me in the original or from good reproductions, the miniatures of the Virgil Codex, cod. Ricc. 492 of the Biblioteca Riccardiana at Florence,<sup>31</sup> and of the cassoni, the *Odyssey* scenes in the Lanckoronski collection<sup>32</sup> as well as the ones formerly at Boehler's,<sup>33</sup> and the *Murder of Caesar* in Oxford,<sup>34</sup> come closest to the Oberlin panel. However, I must refrain from making any statements beyond the suggestions just offered. Whoever looks at the hopeless confusion wrought by R. van Marle in his recent treatment of the Florentine cassoni of the middle of the quattrocento,<sup>35</sup> will realize that a reliable order can be established only on the ground of a careful re-examination of the originals seen together or in close succession, not from "drawer"-notes. Under the present circumstances, it is impossible to attain this goal. The working conditions in a cassone shop are apt to multiply the difficulties inherent in such a task. Differences of quality and—less ob-

<sup>28</sup>Richard Offner, *Italian Primitives at Yale University*, New York, 1927, pp. 27-30.

<sup>29</sup>op. cit., p. 108, and no. 140, pl. XXVII. The *Meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba* is given to the *Cassone Master* by Schubring (no. 195, pl. XLII).

<sup>30</sup>Oswald Sirén, *Catalogue of the Jarves Collection*, 1916.

<sup>31</sup>Schubring, op. cit., nos. 225-244 and plates L-LIII; see also Aby Warburg, op. cit., I, p. 315.

<sup>32</sup>Schubring nos. 245-252, plates LIV-LV.

<sup>33</sup>Schubring no. 253, pl. LVI.

<sup>34</sup>Offner, op. cit., p. 30 and pl. 22, f.

<sup>35</sup>Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. X, The Hague, 1928, p. 547 ff.



Fig. 5. Detail of fig. 1.

*Fig. 6. Detail of fig. 4.*



vious—of style within works of the same *bottega* have already been remarked upon by Schubring;<sup>36</sup> Offner's suggestions<sup>37</sup> seem to corroborate this. We have to bear that fact in mind when we face the problem: Marco del Buono or Apollonio di Giovanni?

We know that Marco del Buono Giamberti, born in 1402, was a pupil of Andrea del Castagno and a member of the Florentine painters' guild as early as 1426; he died in 1489.<sup>38</sup> Vasari calls him Marchino. Apollonio di Giovanni di Tomaso was born in 1415 (not in 1417), was a member of the guild in 1442, and died in 1465.<sup>39</sup> These two artists started their joint workshop in, or at any rate kept records of it since, 1446; the title of the *bottega book* calls them expressly *Dipintori compagni*.<sup>40</sup> The book lists more than 170 marriage chests; the prices vary from 19 to 60 (perhaps 75) guilders. The Rucellai-Vettori item cost 50 fl. as against an average of 30, but it may cover both the Oberlin and the Wittmann panels. It is the last entry but two; Apollonio di Giovanni died in 1465. As long as Marco del Buono and Apollonio di Giovanni are known to us as *dipintori compagni* only, it seems hardly possible to come to a safe conclusion regarding their individual shares in the variegated production before us, even after other difficulties of attribution have been eliminated. In attempting a segregation, we might easily fall into the error of attributing to Marco or Apollonio what was actually a "work"—as far as the execution is concerned—of one or the other of their assistants or apprentices. We shall stand on safer ground as soon as a painting is discovered which clearly shows the individual style of one of the outstanding cassoni of our group and is definitely datable after 1465. If that should happen, we shall know that the master of that work was Marco del Buono—whose com-

<sup>36</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 274, above: "Bei den Truhensbildern ist mehrmals eine auffallende Verschiedenheit der Qualität zu beobachten; Gesellenhände müssen mit geholfen haben."

<sup>37</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>38</sup> Vasari-Milanesi, II, p. 682, note 2; Karl Frey, *Die Loggia dei Lanzi*, Berlin, 1885, p. 365; Schubring, *op. cit.*, p. 88 f.; Thieme-Becker, *Künstlerlexikon*, XXIV, p. 73.

<sup>39</sup> Frey, and Schubring, *ibid.*; Thieme-Becker, *ibid.*, II, p. 33.

<sup>40</sup> Schubring, *op. cit.*, pp. 88 f. and 430 ff.

panion died in 1465. Unfortunately, the miniatures in the Virgil Codex in Florence do not help us either; they are certainly the work of the same "hand" which did the best parts of our cassoni, but since they do not seem to be datable (except "after about 1450"),<sup>41</sup> we still do not know which of the two artists was their author. Some of the evidence seems vaguely to point to Marco del Buono rather than Apollonio di Giovanni: the fact that he was mentioned by Vasari, his apprenticeship with Castagno, the probability that some characteristic works of the *bottega* might easily date later than 1465. But this is not nearly enough to justify an unequivocal attribution of our group to him. As a matter of fact, it is Apollonio di Giovanni whom Cino Rinuccini mentioned as the painter of his marriage chest which appears in the *bottega book*<sup>42</sup>. We shall have to wait and see, and in the meantime be content with having got a little closer to knowing the man—or men—whom Offner has called "the most fashionable and finished of all Florentine cassone-painters".<sup>43</sup>

WOLFGANG STECHOW

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>42</sup>Lee Thieme-Becker, *op. cit.*, II, p. 33.  
<sup>43</sup>*op. cit.*, p. 6.

Fig. 7. Detail of fig. 1.

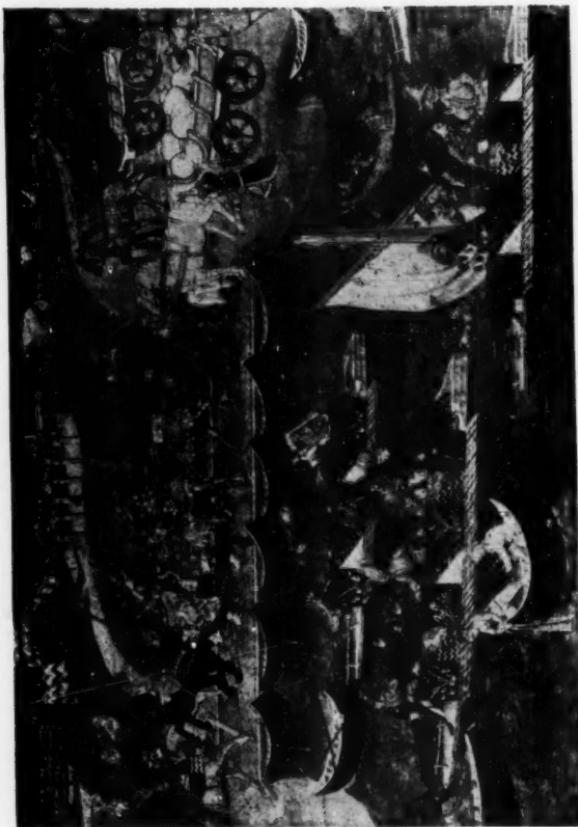


Fig. 8. Detail of fig. 3.



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